



## Contest Director Guidance Notes

*Some friendly advice from Nick Buckenham, international judge and President of CIVA, based on an original document by former international judge, Graham Hill.*

### Purpose

These notes are intended as a brief introduction to the duties and responsibilities of the Contest Director. Please use the **British Aerobatics Operations Manual** as your primary guide.

### The role of the Contest Director

The Contest Director oversees the management of a contest or event and is responsible for its safe and timely operation in accordance with British Aerobatics General Rules and/or, where relevant, CIVA regulations. British Aerobatics' Contest Directors are selected for their experience and ability.

Always remember that the whole event is being staged for PILOTS – not for officials! Consider them both first and last in any decisions you take. You should also make a big effort to establish good relations with the host airfield management and local pilots. It is their home base and we will want to go back there again.

The location of the box must be agreed between you, the Chief Judge (CJ), Head of Contest Organisation (HCO) and the Airfield Operator (AO) and a '**Competition Box Specification and Risk Assessment**' form completed, signed and approved by the HCO **before** the event can start. You will receive this form as a PDF from the British Aerobatics office as part of your contest pack. Please submit the completed form to the HCO as soon as you have completed it and retain the signed original to submit to the British aerobatics office after the contest as it constitutes our official record of your contest box preparations.

Use your other contest officials to the maximum. They are there to work too and allowing them to fulfil their own responsibilities will help provide the best possible result for you and for the contest.

## Principal officials

- Chief Judge (CJ) – runs the judging team and decides the box layout (official wind direction and judging location)
- Registrar – administers pilot entries and documentation
- Scorer – runs the British Aerobatics scoring system, generates the flying orders and other contest paperwork
- Flight Director (FD) – organises pilots to take-off on time; in glider events runs the launch point
- Runner – delivers paperwork from the judging line to the Scorer and vice versa
- Host Airfield Operator representative – the primary contact at the host airfield

*Note: The duties of the Registrar and Scorer are usually handled by one person*

## Overview of main responsibilities

- Good forward planning before the event **is essential** and always pays dividends
- Plan and make notes for the main briefing – this is a key area which you are responsible for
- Get an accurate weather forecast before each briefing starts and study it with the CJ
- Start the briefing **on time** – lateness at this point sets the mindset for the rest of the day
- Try to be decisive in all matters. Pilots and officials always seem to act better on direct instructions
- Never forget that the day is primarily for the pilots. In all matters expect to apply the official rules first, but where appropriate give pilots the benefit of any doubt
- Pilots photos on the scoresheets are important – the scorer will be able to advise on what form these should take
- Maintain a constant awareness of how things are going, the rate of sequence flying, and the likelihood of finishing on time so that you can re-plan as required
- Don't be afraid to adjust the schedule and do make key decisions public when the need arises
- Make sure that you plan in sufficient refreshment and comfort breaks for to the judges and assistants

- Before the end of the contest review your plan for the trophy and medal awards presentation. Try and find someone of note to make the presentations – this is a respected duty!
- Make a proper job of thanking your team of officials, the host airfield operator and staff, especially the air traffic services, fuellers, rescue staff and the catering team.
- Exhort pilots to leave the place tidy and to **settle their accounts**.

## Safety and Emergency Procedures

- Make sure that pilots know and adhere to the local airfield operating and safety procedures, understand the box location and 'no-fly areas', radio procedures and any airborne hold which you may intend to operate
- Be familiar with all key documents: General Rules; Operations Manual; CIVA Regulations; CAA CAP 403 - Flying Displays and Special Events: Safety and Administrative Requirements and Guidance; Procedure in the Event of a Serious Accident or Casualty; Host Airfield Safety Plan.
- CAA permissions or exemptions are not required unless it is planned to fly below 500' the contest is open to the public. Consult the HCO in these circumstances.
- Check that a NOTAM is in place to cover the duration of the contest. These are raised by the HCO, so consult him if you need to amend the NOTAM.
- Responsibility for initiating action by the emergency services rests with the host airfield operator and his staff. If this is not done in a timely manner the CD may take the initiating action before handing over to the airfield staff.
- You may also become involved with the AAIB – contact them using the official mobile phone provided.

### Other reference material:

#### General Rules

Download and/or print the current issue from the website:  
[www.aerobatics.org.uk/publications](http://www.aerobatics.org.uk/publications)

#### Operations Manual

Download and print the current issue from the same location.

#### CD Info-Pack for (your) Contest

This item will be emailed to you about **six weeks** before the event by the British

Aerobatics office. It outlines the main 'important things to do' prior to, during and after contest, and provides some useful contact names and numbers.

 FAI (CIVA) Sporting Code Section-6

If your event is operating to CIVA Rules you will need Part-1 for power or Part-2 for gliders. Get these from the CIVA Document Store at <https://civa-news.com/> .

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